

Bill E. Graham
12698 Roswell Avenue
Chino, California 91710
(714) 627-9969

Dear Ben,

The purpose for this letter is to contact other descendants of the John & Mary GRAHAM family to establish relationships and to inform you of some extensive genealogical work on the GRAHAM family that is going on. A GRAHAM CLAN is being organized for members of the GRAHAM family, a book on the history of the GRAHAM family is nearing publication, and a GRAHAM CLAN NEWSLETTER is being published quarterly. Your name has been given to me as another member of our GRAHAM family. I am delighted to learn of you, and look forward to making friends with another member of the glorious GRAHAMS.

I am a descendant of the John GRAHAM mentioned above. He was born in Surry County, North Carolina, in about 1778, and married Mary (maiden name unknown) in about 1800. They had 5 children in North Carolina, and then moved to Jackson County, Alabama, where they had 4 more. One of those born in N.C., Jesse Graham I, was my ancestor. He married Martha Jane Fannin. They had 10 children in Alabama, and then moved to Texas where they had two more. Third from the oldest was Curtis Beason Graham I, from whom I descend. With his first wife, a Thornton, he had six children on their farm and ranch in Coryell County, Texas. She preceded him in death, after which he married Melissa Swanner and had 7 more children. Fourth in line of the Swanner union was Curtis Beason Graham II, who was my father. He lived the majority of his life in Coryell and Bell Counties, Texas, and died at his home in Alvarado, Texas, in 1965. I lived in Texas until 1962 when I moved to California, where I am still a resident.

Thirty years ago when I was attending the University of Texas I became interested in genealogy. Since that time I have been obsessed with tracing my roots, and it has been a successful search. I have traced my direct lineage for 31 generations to William de Graeme (early spelling of "Graham"), who was born about 1100 A.D., and was granted certain Lothian lands in Scotland by King David I. Descending from that Sir William de Graeme is a long line of Scotsmen who have used their minds and strength to govern, direct armies, lead churches, invent, discover, heal, legislate, apply the trades, teach, furnish foods, and make major contributions to mankind in all areas. Through meticulous research I have been able to compile a story of each generation of Grahams. A rough manuscript is presently being typed, and will hopefully be ready for the printers in the near future. It is my intent to furnish a copy of the book to all Graham descendants for the cost of printing the book. In the meantime I need all the input that I can get for inclusion in the book. This is an appeal to all of you who have not sent in your data; please do it soon. Of course names and dates are important, but I have most of that information already. The area where I am most lacking is stories of their lives. Where did they live, what did they do for a living, and what are some of the major stories of their lives?

I now have photographs of the following children of Jesse Graham I: Sarah Emeline (Graham) Blackwell, Curtis Beason Graham I, John Curtis Graham, Martha Jane (Graham) Manning, Jesse Abner II, and Benjamin Franklin Graham. I do not have any of Isaac Jackson Graham, Dr. Ozias Denton Graham, William Smith Graham, Hulda Ann (Graham) Mc Cloud, or James Monroe Graham. I desperately need them. Please contact anyone who you think may have one of those photographs and see if we can get a copy.

I am enclosing some GRAHAM FAMILY RECORDS of some of your ancestors, as well as a blank one for you to have photocopied for blank forms. Please fill out one page for each member of your family and return to me.

With my best regards,

Bill

Bill E. Graham

(OVER)

30 March, 1986

Dear Ben,

I guess there is enough repetition in the other printed matter that I am enclosing for you to know who I am. The important thing for you to know is that I am a relative of yours (my father and your grandfather Jehu Graham were first cousins) who is researching the Graham family history and writing a set of books about the Grahams. I have been at it for 31 years now, and have almost all of the information I need. However, still there is some input that I am missing, and thank heavens I have been given your name as the source of some of that information. I need some biographical information on William Smith Graham, your Great-Grandfather, and also a photograph for our Graham Family History that I am almost ready to publish. Your mother said that you might possibly have that.

I recently called your mother in response to a lead I was given for information on Wm. Smith Graham. And I must tell you that I think she is one of the dearest women I have ever talked to. At 90 she is sharper than most of us are at 50, and a sheer delight to talk to. It's not hard to see what your dad saw in her, is it? I received a fat envelop in the mail from her today, and in it was some photographs and a long letter giving me a lot of information that I had asked for. Included within her letter is a story of her life, as well as the story of your dad's life, and their married life together. She was very much in love with him, and is an inspiration to us all. She did a spectacular job of writing, and I am sure that you do not have that information. Therefore, I will type it up and send you a copy. She really makes events come to life, and tells the stories with such zest that it is obvious that she has really loved living. Of course she has had her hard knocks in life, but she has enough class that she has always seen beyond her hardships. You kids must have had a wonderful life at home. I know your dad did because in the photographs of her and him, he has a radiant smile on his face. And he has that typical Graham physique: big man, tall forehead, prominent nose, big ears, and high cheekbones. And from your mom's stories of him, he also possessed that characteristic Graham trait of natural leadership among men. The earliest Grahams in Scotland were great warriors, clan leaders, and generals, and those genes have reappeared in every generation of Grahams since. James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, in the early 1600s led the Royalist Army against the Covenanters in their civil war, and won world-wide acclaim for his brilliant strategy and bravery. Against odds of 50-1 he marshalled his troops with speeches and led them fighting out front to victory. He was finally betrayed by the king for whom he was fighting and executed. The Scots then realized what they had done, executed the king, and gave Graham the most royal funeral in the history of Scotland. He is entombed at St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh. My sisters and I visited his tomb last summer when we were in Scotland.

Ben, I will appreciate very much whatever help you can give me with the history of the Wm. Smith Graham family. Between your mom and your four youngest aunts, I have the Jehu Graham family pretty well covered. But I do need all the help I can get with the Wm. Smith G. family. Outside of your grandfather, Jehu, the rest of that family seemed to disappear from the face of the earth. Do you have any information on them? I know who they were and when they were born, but nothing of their lives. Also, do you have any information on the James Monroe Graham family? I have not been able to locate a single descendent of his. I need a photograph of him also. My dad used to speak affectionately of "Uncle Monroe", but everyone seems to sort of lost track of him.

If there is anything that you want that I have, just let me know. Of course it will all be in my Graham History books when it is published, but in the meantime if there is anything you want, I will photocopy it and send to you. Please let me hear from you soon. And if you are visiting in California, we would be honored if you would stop in and pay us a visit.

With best regards,

Bill

Bill Graham